

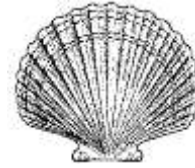
ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

NEWS RELEASE



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ANNOUNCEMENT

COOK INLET COMMERCIAL WEATHERVANE

SCALLOP FISHERY CLOSURE

EO # 2-SF-H-04-13

The Cook Inlet Area Kamishak District commercial weathervane scallop season will be closed for the 2013 and 2014 seasons.

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) biennially assesses weathervane scallops on two beds in the Kamishak District. Recent surveys have documented a declining trend in weathervane scallop abundance and biomass in both the North and South beds of Kamishak Bay. The North Bed has been surveyed since 1996, with the first survey producing an estimate of 15,674,085 scallops and the most recent survey in 2013 estimated 1,937,665 scallops. The 2013 estimate is almost one million scallops lower (33%) than the results from the 2011 survey. The survey on the South Bed began in 2003 producing an estimate of 9,434,220 scallops, which has decreased every survey except one to the lowest estimate of 1,913,247 scallops in 2013. Since 2009, the South bed has been closed to commercial fishing because of low estimated abundance and biomass.

In addition to the decrease in overall abundance and biomass, the age structure in each of the beds shows very low numbers of large, older individuals. Closing both beds to fishing for two seasons will allow the current biomass to reproduce and generate potential future recruitment and enable younger scallops to grow and potentially recruit to the fishery. The next survey in Kamishak Bay will occur in 2015.

For additional information contact ADF&G in Homer.

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